

As a physician in Hartford, CT I have serious concerns about HB 6645. Although I am busy treating patients during the hearing on March 20, 2013, I would like to express my opinion regarding this bill to legalize Physician-Assisted Suicide.

1. Physicians can NOT predict life expectancy with any accuracy.
2. The guiding principle of medicine, The Hippocratic Oath, for over two thousand years has instructed physicians NOT to give "a deadly drug to anybody...". I took that oath as did most of my colleagues in Connecticut. I do not agree with giving physicians the right to kill patients.
3. Physician-assisted suicide has been fraught with abuse and inadequate oversight in every place it has been approved. The two physician approach does NOT protect patients.
4. Physician-assisted suicide has been linked with an increased suicide rate in Oregon. In light of the recent horrific events at Sandy Hook, do we in Connecticut really want to condone suicide or should we be demonstrating that we respect and value life.
5. Physician-assisted suicide is often the least expensive treatment option. Let's not give third-party payers the possible disincentive to provide life-saving treatment or compassionate end of life care for financial reasons.

Instead of physician-assisted suicide, let's work on a bill which promotes truly compassionate care, a bill that enhances life with dignity, a bill that improves hospice and palliative care!

Sincerely,

Jeffrey J. Meter, MD